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Behind the numbers: How many people work one hour/week?

Have you ever wondered why official labour statistics around the world classify someone who has worked one hour per week as employed?

"While on face value one hour may seem like a low threshold, it is important in counting everyone who is involved in production activities in the economy," said Bruce Hockman, Chief Economist at the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

"It is a measure of who is employed, not how fully employed people are, which is covered by other measures.

An article released by the ABS today shows that in 2018 around 1 in 1,000 employed people usually worked one hour per week. This has not changed much in recent years.

"It's important to remember that 97 per cent of employed people usually work 7 hours or more per week," Mr Hockman said.

"While public attention may be focused on employment and unemployment, these two statistics alone cannot highlight whether people want more work, what their earnings are, and what employment conditions they are entitled to," Mr Hockman said.

"No single labour market measure can answer every question, which is why the ABS releases such a broad range of information throughout the year. In combination, these provide a greater understanding of Australia's labour market."

Media note:

- A full list of publications containing Labour Market data can be found in the Labour Statistics Concepts, Sources and Methods (cat. no. 6102.0.55.001).
- When reporting ABS data, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) must be attributed as the source.
- For media requests and interviews, contact the ABS Media Team on 1300 175 070 or media@abs.gov.au (8.30am - 5pm Monday - Friday AEST).
- Labour Force Survey data is complemented by other ABS measures to build a comprehensive picture of the labour market. **Jobs in Australia** data provides insights into all jobs held throughout the year.
- Labour Accounts data provides the number of filled jobs at a point-in-time each quarter, while Labour Force data measures the number of people employed each month.
- Subscribe to our email notification service and get media releases or products sent to you on release.

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